

Peck's Bad Boy in an Airship

BY HON. GEORGE W. PECK

PREPARES TO INVADE AFRICA

Pa has had the hardest time of his life in Paris, and if I ever pitied a man it was Pa.

You see, that last fly in the airship pretty near caused him to cash in his chips, and go over the long road to the hereafter, 'cause he got blood poison from the thorns that run into him where he landed in the top limbs of the thornapple tree, and he sprained his arm and one hind leg while being taken down with a derick, and then before we left the country town for Paris he drank some goat's milk, which gave him pomanie poison in his inside works, and a peasant woman who sewed up his pants where they were torn on the tree pricked him with a needle, and he swelled up so he was unable to sit in a car seat, and his face was scratched by the thorns of the tree and there were blotches all over him, so when we got to Paris the health officers thought he had smallpox and sent him to a pest house, and they wouldn't let him in, but vaccinated me and turned me loose, and I went to the hotel and told about where Pa was, and all about it, and they put our baggage in a sort of oven filled with sulphur and disinfected it, and stole some of it, and they made me sleep in a dog kennel, and for weeks I had to keep out of sight, until Pa was discharged from the hospital, and the friends of Pa out at the airship club in the country got Pa's airship that he bought for a government out of the tree and took it to the club and presented a bill for \$200, and I only had \$7, so they held it for ransom.

Gee, but I worried about Pa!

Well, one day Pa showed up at the hotel looking like he had been in a railroad wreck, and he was so thin his clothes had to be pinned up with safety pins, and he had spent all his money, and was bursted.

The man who hired Pa in Washing

ton government agent, and all his papers authorized him to do was to travel at his own expense, and to buy all the airships he wanted to, with his own money, and Pa had a fit. All the money he had spent was a dead loss, and all he had to show for it was a punctured airship, which he was afraid to ride in.

Pa swore at the government, at the consul, and at the man who humored him, and they released him from arrest, when he promised that he would not pose any more as a government agent, and we went back to the hotel.

"Well, this is a fine scrape you have got me in," says Pa, as we went to our room.

"What in thunder did I have to do about it?" says I; just like that. "I won't with you when you framed up this job and let a man in Washington skin you out of your money by giving you a soft snap snap which has exploded in your hands. Gee, Pa, what you need is a maid or a valet, or something that will hold on to your waist." Pa said he didn't need anybody to act as a guardian to him, 'cause he had all the money he needed in his letter of credit to the American Express Company in Paris, and he knew how to spend his money freely, but he did hate to be humored and made the laughing stock of two continents.

So Pa and I went down to the Express office, and Pa gave the man in charge a paper and the grand building sign of distress, and he handed out bags of gold and bales of bills, and Pa hid a lot in his leather belt and put some in his pockets, and said, "Come on, Henry, and we will see this town, and buy it if we like it."

Well, we went out after dark and took in the concert halls and things, and Pa drank wine and I drank nothing but ginger ale, and women who waited on us patted his old bald head, and tried to feel his pockets, but Pa

by the collar the pants and made him walk turkey towards the fountain, and he held on to the girl, and the Frenchmen threw Pa and the girl into the brink with a flock of ducks, and they went under water, and Pa came up first yelling murder, and then the girl came up hanging to Pa's neck, and she gave a French yell of agony.

Our friends knocked the Frenchmen away, and pulled Pa out of the water and let him drain off, and they said, "Hello, old man, how did you happen to let them drown you?" and Pa saw who the boys were and he hugged them, and invited them to all take something, and then go to his hotel.

When Pa paid the check for the drinks they charged in two ducks they said Pa killed in the tank by falling on them. But Pa paid it and was so tickled to meet the old circus boys that he gave the girl he went in swimming with a 20-franc note, and after staying until about midnight, we all got into and on top of a buck and went to the hotel and sat up till daylight taking things over.

We found the circus boys were on the way to Germany to go with the Hagenbach outfit to South Africa to capture wild animals for circuses, and when Pa told the boss, who was one of the Hagenbach's managers, about his mishap, and what a queer thing it would be to sail around where the lions and tigers live in the jungle, and hear them, from up in the air, out of danger, he engaged Pa and me to go along, and I guess we will know all about Africa pretty soon.

The next day we went out to the club where Pa keeps his airship, with the boss of the Hagenbach's outfit and a cowboy that used to be with Pa's circus, to practice lassoing things. They got out the machine and Pa started it, and the boss and I were passengers, and the cowboy was on the railing in front with his lariat rope, and we sailed along about 50 feet high over the farms, until we saw a big goat. The cowboy motioned for Pa to steer towards the goat, and when we got near enough the cowboy threw the rope over the goat's horns and tightened it up, and Mr. Goat came right along with us, bleating and fighting. We led the goat about half a mile over some fences, and finally came down to the ground to examine our catch, and we landed all right, and Hagenbach's boss said it was the greatest scheme that ever was for catching wild animals, and he doubled Pa's salary, and said we would pack up the next day and go to the Hagenbach farm in Germany and take a steamer for South Africa in a week.

They were talking it over, and the cowboy had released the goat, when that animal made a charge with his head on our party. He struck Pa below the belt, butted the boss in the trousers until he laid down and begged for mercy, stabbed the cowboy with his horns, and then made a hop, skip and jump for the gas bag, burst a hole in it, and when the gas began to escape the goat's horns got caught in the gas bag and the goat died from the effects of the gas, and we were all glad until about 50 peasant women came across the fields with agricultural implements, and were going to kill us all.

Pa said, "Well, what do you know about that?" but the women were fierce and wanted blood. The boss could talk French and he offered to give them the goat to settle it, but they said it was their goat anyway, and they wanted blood or damages.

Pa said it was easier to give damages than blood, and just as they were going to cut up the gas bag the boss settled with them for about \$20, and hired them to haul the airship to the nearest station, and we shipped it to Berlin, and got ready to follow the next day.

Pa says we will have a high old time in Africa. He says he wants to ride up to a lion's den in his airship and dare the fiercest lion to come out and fight, and that he wouldn't like any better fun than to ride over a royal Bengal tiger in the jungle, and reach down and grab his tail and make him snarl like a tom cat on a fence in the alley.

He talks about riding down a herd of elephants, and picking out the biggest ones and roping them; and the way Pa is going to scare rhinoceroses and hippopotamuses and make them blent like calves is a wonder.

I think Pa is the bravest man I ever saw, when he tells it, but I noticed when he had that goat by the horns and he was caught in a barbed wire fence, so the airship had to slow down until he came loose, Pa turned as pale as a sheet, and when the goat bucked him in the stomach Pa's lips moved as though he was praying. Well, anyway, this trip to Africa to catch wild animals is going to show what kind of sand there is in all of us.

TALK OF NEW YORK

Gossip of People and Events Told in Interesting Manner.

Election Night a Wild One on Broadway



NEW YORK—Never in history did Broadway, center of New York's celebrating crowds, hold such a mass of people as slowly moved up and down its sidewalks from early evening on election night until dawn the next day. Between the flatirons, from Madison square to Longacre square, the walks and the street itself were filled with a densely packed election throng. The police, who lined the curbs, worked the crowd into some sort of order. Those bound up town were headed on the east side of the street, while the west side was reserved for those going in the opposite direction.

Kobe was the most prominent character at the crowd, but this was

almost equalled by the people's good nature. The election night was high. Men and women laughed when their names in letters were blown in their ears, when they were showered with confetti, when "ticklers" were thrust into their faces, and even when hats were blown and phones were torn off. The greatest crowds gathered in front of the uptown newspaper offices, where bulletins of the election were flashed on electric screens. If there was any interesting device that was not present on the street it was because enterprising fakirs failed to know it.

Tin horns, old-fashioned police rattles, shrill whistles, enormous cow bells, automobile horns, and 1,900 other ear-cracking inventions were on every hand while the extra rained comfort.

Thousands of people visited the booths, in practically all of which election returns were being given out for the occasion. Some read between and during acts.

No New Ruler of Gotham Society Likely



IN social circles there is much discussion these days of the question of Mrs. Astor's successor as society's leader. Among the names mentioned are Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mrs. Clarence Mackay and Mrs. Ogden Goelet. All of these matrons are leaders of their special coteries, and have taken prominent parts in social affairs here and abroad. There is a prevailing belief, however, that the "400" of old has ceased to exist as a unit, and that it will henceforth be in many divisions, with leaders for each.

Frederick Townsend Martin, successor to the late Ward McAllister as leader of New York society, said there

will be no successor to Mrs. Astor.

"I do not think there will be a successor to Mrs. Astor as the ruler of New York society," he said. Her influence was so protected that for some years society has gone along without her. It is true her influence was very marked at all times, but she did not participate actively in affairs, and marked changes have occurred since her reign ceased to be absolute.

Society is no longer a unit. When it was dominated by Mrs. Astor there was perfect unanimity and harmony. Now it is divided into many cliques, and I do not believe any one person will ever succeed in bringing these together again.

Mrs. Astor's townhouse at 824 Fifth avenue, has long been one of the more notable of the summer objects of interest to the sightseer visiting New York, and seeking out the abodes of the social mighty as feasts for the eyes. Her establishment, Deschamps, at Newport has ever been the place of magnificent entertainments.

Heavy Exodus Makes Flat Rents Fall



RENTS of flats are falling. People did not rush back from their summer vacations to crowd into dining rooms as usual. Vacant flats are seen everywhere in the old centers. Prices are down ten per cent. in many sections.

Owners held their rentals firm this fall. Although their vacancies during the summer had been larger than in any other year, they thought that the rush back to town would fill their houses.

But the October moving day startled them. There was less moving than in any of the last five years. And persons who moved away from the old districts, as a rule, to make their homes in new buildings such as those on Washington Heights.

Registration figures show that more than 100,000 persons have moved out of Manhattan during the past two years. Aside from this big shift,

50,000 more have moved into the Washington Heights districts.

Nor does the movement away from old crowded city home districts show the entire two-year loss in flat house tenancies. Over 200,000 immigrants a year, or 100,000 for the past two years, would have sought homes in New York if conditions had been like those of the four preceding years. Most of them would have crowded into immigrant sections, thus causing an overflow that would have driven older residents from other neighborhoods.

But, instead of gaining 200,000 immigrants a year, New York has lost nearly 100,000 immigrants since the panic. They looked for homes carrying over \$20,000,000 in savings.

From the immigrant movement alone New York has 100,000 less people than would have been here if conditions had been normal. Nearly all would have been crowded into the older tenement districts for family groups are clannish, and keep together in spite of the higher rents which they are forced to pay because they do not spread out. And the movement of older families away from crowded centers, as is shown by the registrations of schools and voters, has taken another 100,000.

Portrait Painter Sues Rich Woman



GEORGE BURROUGHS TORREY, the American portrait painter, whose portrait of President Roosevelt has become famous, has brought suit against Mrs. John H. Hanan, the beautiful society woman of New York and Narragansett Pier, for \$4,000, alleging breach of contract.

In speaking of the case, Mr. Torrey said:

"More than a year ago Mrs. Hanan sat for me a number of times, then seemed to lose interest in the matter. Several months ago the portrait was practically finished, but I could not persuade Mrs. Hanan to sit again.

"She was traveling a great deal, and while she seemed immensely pleased with the painting, and all of

her friends who saw it were enthusiastic, it was impossible for me to get her to come to my studio or to take the painting as it was.

"Finally, I had to place the matter in the hands of my lawyer. I have painted some of the best-known and greatest people in the world, including the queen of England, the king of Greece, Andrew Carnegie, Pardon Clarke and many others.

Mrs. Hanan was Edith Evelyn Betts of Narragansett before she married the wealthy Charles Talbot Smith of Newport. Mr. Smith died in 1904, just as his wife was about to be divorced from him.

A few years later, just after she had married Joseph H. Thompson, Jr., she was followed to Newport by the millionaire shoe manufacturer, Hanan of Brooklyn, who had finished presents upon her and who demanded them back. Mrs. Thompson went to Europe with her husband. There was a divorce later, however, and after Mr. Hanan's wife had also obtained a divorce, he married Mrs. Thompson.



After Pa Had Been Ducked in the Fountain They Charged for Two Ducks He Killed by Falling on Them.

ton to go abroad and buy airships for the government told Pa to use his own money for a month or two and then draw on the secretary of the treasury for all he needed, so before Pa went to the hospital he drew on his government for \$10,000, and when he came back there was a letter for him from the American consul in Paris telling him to call at the office, so Pa went there and they arrested him on the charge of skull dugging. They said he had no right to draw for any money on the government at Washington. Pa showed his papers with the big seal on, and the consul laughed in Pa's face, and Pa was hot under the collar and wanted to fight, but they showed him that the papers he had were no good, and that he had been buncoed by some fakir in Washington who got \$500 from Pa for securing him a job as

held on to their wrists and told them to keep away, and I thought Pa was real saucy.

A head waiter whispered to me and wanted to know what ailed the old sport, and I told him Pa was bitten by a wolf in our circus last year, and we feared he was going to have hydrophobia, and always when these spells come on the only thing to do was to throw him into a tank of water, and I should be obliged to them if they would take Pa and duck him in the fountain in the center of the cafe, and save his life.

Pa was making up with the girl he had paddled with the silver tray, buying champagne for her and drinking some of it himself out of her slipper, when the head waiter called half a dozen Frenchmen who were doing police duty, and told them to duck Pa in the fountain, and they grabbed him